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Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Note verbale dated 27 February 2017 from the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

The Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and has the honour to provide herewith the comments of the Government of Greece in relation to the written statement by the Federal Union of European Nationalities, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (A/HRC/34/NGO/78) (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of Greece kindly requests the Office of the High Commissioner to circulate the present note verbale and the annex* as a document of the thirty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council under agenda item 3, in addition to the comments it already provided (A/HRC/34/G/6).

* Reproduced as received, in the language of submission only.

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Annex to the note verbale dated 27 February 2017 from the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Comments of the Greek Government in relation to the written statement A/HRC/34/NGO/78 submitted by the Federal Union of European Nationalities

With regard to what is mentioned in FUEN's statement A/HRC/34/NGO/78, it is disgraceful to see a connection between two totally unrelated topics; an effort frequently undertaken by Turkish foreign policy to which FUEN subscribes.

Gökçeada (Imbros) and Bozcaada (Tenedos) are two islands mentioned in the International Treaty of Lausanne (1923), which granted them special administrative organization.

Nevertheless, Turkey has systematically done anything possible to undermine this provision and eliminate all the Greek population from the islands, through measures like arbitrary seizure of properties — which have not been returned yet — targeted over-taxation, closing-down of schools, desecration of places of worship, intimidation through the establishment of an open prison consisted of heavily convicted criminals and lifers etc. All the above-mentioned, carefully planned actions forced the bulk of the islands' Greek population to exile from the 1960s onwards.

The reopening of a minority school in Gökçeada (Imbros) — but not in Bozcaada (Tenedos), as mentioned in FUEN's statement — is just a very small step with regard to what needs to be done, so that the provisions of the Lausanne Treaty are implemented.